REMARKS

Independent claim 1 has been amended to better define the invention and further distinguish it from the art of record. Specifically, claim 1 now indicates that the reaction between the coagulant and the layer of foam is ended part-way through by removing uncoagulated foam that would otherwise coagulate to form a film skin. Support for this limitation can be seen, for example, on page 11, lines 20-30 of the International Application as filed. As a result of this process, the claimed cohesive, porous, and breathable layer of polymeric material remains.

The Examiner has rejected all of the claims primarily in light of Jenkins '418 taken either in combination with Vogt '562 or in combination with Vogt '562 and Halley '924.

Jenkins '418 – This reference teaches away from the instant invention and could not be modified to provide a cohesive, porous, and breathable polymer layer, as claimed herein, without destroying the intended function set forth in the '418. Jenkins is directed to the production of rubber gloves such as would be used by a surgeon or a "household" type rubber glove. (See column 3, line 48). In fact, careful temperature control of the rubber vulcanizing step must be achieved lest the glove "blow" or become spongy and cellular in nature. (See column 8, lines 48-51). Indeed, in the latex immersion step, the process results in the deposition of a "coherent deposit 32a of neoprene . . . of substantially uniform thickness throughout." (Column 7, lines 52-56).

Jenkins makes reference to "washing away" of the uncoagulated latex (column 7, lines 57-65; column 5, lines 3-38), but this disclosure does not teach or suggest the instantly claimed process which requires a stopping of the coagulation part-way through i.e., removing un-coagulated latex that would otherwise be coagulated to form a film skin. As will be appreciated from column 5, lines 10 to 16 and column 7, lines 49 to 52, in the Jenkins method, coagulation takes place while the substrate is immersed in latex. The length of the tank containing the latex, and so the period of time for which the substrate is immersed in the latex, is such that coagulation is complete before the substrate is removed from the tank. That is, when the substrate is removed from the latex a film skin will have formed on the fully coagulated latex layer. Of course there will be a "small quantity of non-coagulated latex" on some parts of the outside of the fully coagulated layer when the substrate is removed from the tank of latex. This non-coagulated latex,

which would never coagulate, is what is washed away in the Jenkins method. Presumably, to wash it away rather than to let it drain away or evaporate makes the method faster and therefore more efficient. To wash it away does not, however, prevent a film skin being formed.

Additionally, as stated above, Jenkins does not produce the claimed cohesive porous, and breathable polymeric layer and due to Jenkins' desired production of surgeon's or household type gloves and its expressed desire not to form spongy, cellular gloves, it would destroy the very function or purpose of Jenkins to modify it to achieve the instantly claimed features.

The Vogt reference describes a process in which a foamed latex is heated to uniformly coagulate the latex over the entire substrate such as to prevent a continuous film formation on the fabric surface (cf. column 5, lines 50 to 54 and column 6, lines 24 and 25). There is no disclosure of washing away uncoagulated foam part-way through the coagulation process.

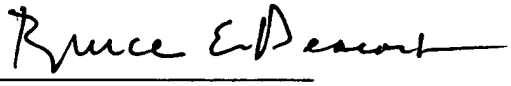
Additionally, Haley does not teach the instantly claimed step of washing away of uncoagulated foam part-way through the coagulation process.

For the above reasons, it is earnestly contended that the application is in full conformity with the patent statutes. The issuance of a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if, during the course of reconsideration of this application, any questions or comment should arise.

Respectfully submitted,

WEGMAN, HESSLER & VANDERBURG

By 

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